

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (cancelled).

2. (new) A device for supporting heart tissue in a beating heart, said device comprising:

a band adapted to surround the heart, said band having a first end and a second end; and

a support-inducing member positioned to draw the ends of the band together when the band is disposed over the heart.

3. (new) A device as in claim 2, wherein the band comprises a woven or non-woven polymeric fabric,

4. (new) A device as in claim 3, wherein the fabric is composed of a polyfluorocarbon or polyolefin selected from the group consisting of polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE or TFE), ethylene chlorofluoroethylene (ECTFE), fluorinated ethylene propylene (FEP), polychlorotrifluoroethylene (PCTFE), polyvinylfluoride (PVF), polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF), polyethylene (LDPE, LLDPE, and HDPE), and polypropylene.

5. (new) A device according to claim 2, wherein the device further comprises a time delay member adapted to provide a period of time between an introduction of the band into a human body and initiation of a movement of the ends of the band towards each other.

6. (new) A device according to claim 5, wherein the time-delay member comprises a biodegradable material.

7. (new) A device as in claim 2, wherein the support-inducing member comprises a spring.

8. (new) A device as in claim 7, wherein the spring is a coil spring.

9. (new) A device as in claim 7, wherein the spring is a flat spring.

10. (new) A device as in claim 7, wherein the spring is initially held in an expanded state by a biodegradable element, wherein degradation of the biodegradable element releases the spring.

11. (new) A method for treating congestive heart failure, said method comprising:
placing a band having a first end and a second end around a beating heart; and
drawing first and second ends of the band toward each other to provide support to a myocardial wall of the heart.

12. (new) A method as in claim 11, wherein the first and second ends are located on opposite sides of a region of infarcted tissue.

13. (new) A method as in claim 11, wherein the band adheres to the heart region.

14. (new) A method as in claim 11, wherein drawing comprises disposing a spring under tension between said first and second ends of the band.

15. (new) A method as in claim 11, further comprising delaying the drawing of the first and second ends for a preselected time after placing the band around the heart.

16. (new) A method as in claim 15, wherein delaying the drawing of the first and second ends comprises allowing degradation of a biodegradable element incorporated into a spring element.

17. (new) A method as in claim 15, wherein delaying the drawing of the first and second ends comprises holding the ends apart with a biodegradable member.

18. (new) A method as in claim 11, further comprising introducing the band to the heart.

19. (new) A method as in claim 18, further comprising introducing the band to a position of the heart at or below the arterioventricular groove.

20. (new) A method as in claim 18, wherein introducing comprises advancing the band via a subxiphoid approach.

21. (new) A method as in claim 11, wherein treating congestive heart failure comprises treating the anatomic complication of ventricle septal rupture.

22. (new) A method as in claim 11, wherein treating congestive heart failure comprises treating the anatomic complication of mitral regurgitation.

23. (new) A method as in claim 11, wherein treating congestive heart failure comprises treating the anatomic complication of ventricular aneurysm.

24. (new) A method as in claim 11, wherein treating congestive heart failure comprises treating the anatomic complication of ATC.